

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GOVERNOR'S  
COUNCIL ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES

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prepared for the

MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

January 12, 1983



## THE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES

The Council consists of the group as a whole, an Executive Committee, three standing committees and an ad hoc Committee on Education. The three standing committees are Toxic Incidents, Health Effects and Economic Impact. The ad hoc Committee on Education was appointed to develop ways by which the Council can be of assistance in getting the truth about toxic and carcinogenic substances across to the public, rather than the piece-meal and often specious information to which it reacts in time of emergency.

In the main, the Council's time was spent on its assigned task of reviewing proposed legislation concerning toxic and carcinogenic substances, evaluating how toxic substances episodes were handled, receiving updates on agency action regarding toxic substances, and assessing emergency episodes responses.

A serious concern emerged early in 1982 over the problem of the disposal of toxic materials. This problem centered around the Solley Road Hazardous Waste Facility and the conflict it created, along with the controversy surrounding the new facility at Hawkins Point. In dealing with the two obvious facts of public concern and public necessity, the Council decided that it has a responsibility to try to inform the public about the true dangers of toxic substances. So much misinformation is circulated, that the real issues become clouded, and the public is, in many cases, unnecessarily alarmed.

The Council decided that the best way information could be disseminated to the public would be through symposia led by Council members, to which would be invited concerned citizens such as members of the media, high school science and social studies teachers, members of the League of Women Voters.

A first symposium was held on June 25 at the Hunt Valley Inn, and attracted 120 participants to an all-day session on low-level nuclear wastes, how they are generated, problems with disposal, along with health effects of exposure to radiation. A video tape was made by one of the members, with the hope that a "road show" could be taken to various areas of the State, or the tape offered for loan to interested groups. Post-symposium reports were favorable so that a second one was planned.

This second effort, which attracted 140 participants, was held at the Village of Cross Keys on October 14, 1982 and dealt with toxic agents and their effects, toxinogenesis, toxic substances regulation and their control in industry, and the epidemiological evidence of toxic risks. The participants enthusiastically reported that they had considered it to be of considerable interest and a day well spent.

Neither of these symposia were funded by the State, the monies coming from either federal sources, or from private funds given through the Maryland Chamber of Commerce. The Council believes that several more symposia are needed for the general public and members of the General Assembly. The difficulties of obtaining funding will limit future endeavors. Therefore, the

Council is investigating various sources of funding, including an item in the F.Y. 1985 budget for limited funding.

The Council was given a comprehensive overview of the new Hawkins Point Hazardous Waste Disposal Facility by Mr. Thomas McKewen, Director of the Maryland Environmental Service. A conducted tour of the John's Hopkins Medical Institution's work at the Occupational Safety and Health facility at the old U.S. Public Health Service Hospital proved to be very informative. The Council reviewed and suggested some changes to the now-adopted Asbestos Control and Licensing and Regulations.

The Toxic Episodes Committee revised the Hazardous Materials Emergency Response brochure, which is supplied to all police and fire department dispatchers, haulers of hazardous wastes and other appropriate health and safety officials; and continued oversight of various projects funded under grants from the federal Toxic Substances Control Act.

Several members of the Council were reappointed by Governor Hughes, while some new persons were named to fill vacancies created by resignations.

Dr. Robert Goodman, Associated Director of Research, Department of Economic and Community Development, was elected Chairman, succeeding Mr. Clement Gardiner who resigned. Dr. Max Eisenberg, Director, Science and Environmental Health of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Office of Environmental Programs

was re-elected Vice-Chairman. Dr. Irvin I. Kessler, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, University School of Medicine is Chairman of the Health Effects Committee; Dr. Peter Chodoff, Chief, Critical Care/Anesthesia, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Systems and Clinical Professor of Anesthesiology, University of Maryland School of Medicine was appointed Chairman to the Toxic Episodes Committee; and David Shriver, Chief, Pesticides Division, Maryland Department of Agriculture, now heads the Economic Impact Committee.

The Council continues to explore ways in which it can serve the State and her citizens in protecting public health from the misuse of toxic and carcinogenic substances. The Council serves as a forum where state agencies, medical institutions and the public can discuss their activities, so that an integrated approach emerges.